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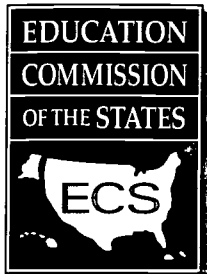
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ABSTRACT

This brochure gives a brief overview of Wyoming Governor Jim Geringer's focus as 1999-2000 Education Commission of the States (ECS) Chairman. Section 1 discusses a focus on quality, explaining that students learn more from well-prepared, quality teachers and that the challenge is how to equip every teacher with the necessary abilities and tools. Section 2 examines lessons learned from the past several decades about ways to increase teacher quality. Section 3 focuses on what must happen next in public education, noting the importance of such things as implementing performance-based assessment systems for students and teachers; emphasizing classroom performance in university-based teacher education programs; encouraging effective alternative teacher certification and preparation strategies; and restructuring schools to become learning organizations. Section 4 discusses the work that lies ahead for the ECS, including identifying key issues; clarifying and cataloguing new and promising policy options; and encouraging and helping state leaders in their quest to develop effective policy structures. Section 5 explains how states can participate. Section 6 presents a schedule of events during 1999-2000 for the ECS. Section 7 offers 16 World Wide Web resources. (SM)

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QUALITY TEACHERS for the 21st Century

What's Inside

FOCUS ON QUALITY

LESSONS LEARNED

WHAT MUST
HAPPEN NEXT

FOCUS ON THE
WORK AHEAD

HOW CAN
YOU PARTICIPATE?

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

RESOURCES

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1

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Jim Geringer

GOVERNOR OF WYOMING
1999-2000 ECS CHAIRMAN



In the not-too-distant-future, the nation will experience a serious shortage of well-qualified teachers. There are two principal reasons. First, a significant number of teachers are nearing retirement age, necessitating their replacement. Second, with the robust growth in the national and many regional economies, the demand for skilled profes-

sionals is drawing many college graduates away from teaching as a profession. The problem is most acute in states with high population growth, particularly in the subject areas of mathematics, science and special education.

So how do we prepare our teachers, our students and our institutions for the future? How will we keep pace with the need for ongoing teacher development? Should we spend more money on teachers? Yes, definitely for the good ones. But who determines what "good" is? And, we must remember that throwing more money at education too often is used as an easy solution to a complicated problem.

I believe our success in education won't be measured by how much we spend per student, but in whether students achieve a desired result. Any remedy to financing education, whether at the K-12 or higher education levels, will depend upon our ability to define the results and then develop institutions and methods that can deliver education toward those results.

The majority of our nation's schools still are structured on a model suited for a time that is past — not one prepared to meet the challenges of the future. That means we need new structures, new technology, new funding formulas and new professional development methods for our educators. We must focus on student competency, not just seat time. Our children need education that is learned, not just taught. Teachers must be paid as valued professionals, but, in turn, the teaching profession must rid itself of those persons who don't measure up.

As the 1999-2000 chairman of the Education Commission of the States, I will work to determine what defines a quality teacher, how those attributes and skills translate into a high level of student achievement, and what policies must be put in place to make high-quality teaching and learning happen. I look forward to working with you as we focus on increasing student learning through improved professional development.

3

QUALITY TEACHERS *for the 21st Century*

Assuring
teacher quality —
the next frontier
for improving
the nation's
public schools

FOCUS ON QUALITY

All students learning at high levels. All classrooms staffed with highly qualified teachers. This is the hope. This is the vision. This is the goal of American education.

After two decades of struggling with K-12 education reform, the education community and the nation's policymakers understand far better how to reach this goal. They understand what needs to happen to create an education system that helps all students learn. They understand the components of that system: knowing what it is students should learn; articulating those expectations in standards for student achievement; and developing an assessment system that measures individual student achievement based on those standards.

States and districts are in differing stages of bringing these components to fruition. Even in states and districts that have not made much progress, however, new studies have found that a quality teaching force is critical to the process of improving student achievement. After spending the past 17 years trying to determine what inhibits and promotes student learning, William Sanders,

professor and director of the University of Tennessee Value-Added Research and Assessment Center says, "It's not grades, it's not poverty, it's not money that counts. It's teaching."

Sanders' research indicates that students with comparable achievement levels have "vastly different academic outcomes as a result of the sequence of teachers to which they are assigned." Similar studies in Boston and Dallas confirm the Tennessee findings.

Additionally, these studies reinforce what traditionally has been common wisdom:

- **Students learn more from well-prepared, quality teachers.**

This statement is true regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnicity, a student's level of preparedness or whether the student's school is located in an urban or rural area. Research has shown that well-trained teachers have a positive impact on student achievement, while poorly trained teachers have a negative impact.

- **If a student has a good teacher for consecutive years, the impact**

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of the good teaching is compounded every year a student is exposed to such teaching.

Unfortunately, the opposite also is true. If a student has an exceptionally bad teacher for just one year, making up the deficit created in that time takes several years.

- **Schools with less effective teachers tend to produce lower-achieving students.**

Typically, these schools are located in low-income urban and rural communities.

Proving common wisdom to be true, however, does not go far enough. If teachers cannot use this wisdom in practical ways to focus on their students' needs, then this insight will be for naught.

Teachers must have access to individual student assessment data in a timely fashion so they can tailor their instruction to meet each student's needs. This requires the quick collection and summarization of student results — and the sharing of these results with the professionals interacting with students in the classroom.

If teachers are expected to tailor their instructional efforts to help each student achieve at the highest level possible, they must be equipped with the following:

- A thorough understanding of state student achievement standards and the instructional strategies that can be used to achieve them
- Ability to reach students from diverse backgrounds and at various levels of initial preparedness
- Ability to integrate technology into their everyday classroom practice
- Thorough understanding of emerging research about how students learn reading, writing and mathematics
- Real-time individual student assessment data returned in a way that allows teachers quickly to tailor individual instruction to meet assessed student needs.

The challenge is how to equip every teacher with these abilities and tools, and how to ensure that he or she uses them to be as effective as possible. To meet this challenge, some past mistakes must be recognized and not repeated.

LESSONS LEARNED

Over the past several decades, various strategies have been put forward as ways to increase teacher quality, some successfully, others not. For example:

- In the late '50s and early '60s, effective curriculum content

was considered to be the determining factor in the quality of teaching. "Teacher proofing" the curriculum, however, did not yield the desired results.

- In the early '80s, certification requirements for new and con-

tinuing teachers were viewed as unrelated to the aspects of teaching that increased student achievement. Steps were taken to bring these more into line with what research showed helps to improve learning.

- In 1986, *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*, published by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, called for the creation of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The board worked to create performance-based assessments for teachers by subject area and level taught. It was a critical step forward.

- In the '90s, demand has increased for alternative routes into the teaching profession and an emerging role for the electronic delivery of teacher preparation and ongoing professional development services, such as the Western Governors University and the British Open University. These developments promise a future for teacher preparation and training that will be far different than the past.



WHAT MUST HAPPEN NEXT

Public education is at a crossroads. Which path is right? The selection of a path may need to be "the one less traveled," in the words of the poet Robert Frost, if policymakers and educators want to guide education well.

We must develop and implement performance-based assessment systems for students and teachers.

- Student content standards in traditional subjects (e.g., math, reading, social studies) should provide the fundamental basis, but not the sole basis, for assessing student learning. Moral leadership, civic responsibility and artistic creativity, for example, also are important qualities to impart to students.
- Teachers should be certified based on demonstrated perfor-

mance regardless of the means or accreditation of their preparation.

- Teacher performance must be evaluated on an ongoing basis and based significantly on students' learning gains.
- Teacher rewards and incentives should be performance-based. Teachers whose performance repeatedly is ineffective must be retrained or dismissed. Even teachers who are tenured should have their effectiveness reevaluated on an ongoing basis.

We must emphasize classroom performance in university-based teacher education programs at least as much as intellectual understanding.

We must develop and implement performance-based assessment systems for students and teachers.



*We must
restructure
schools
to become
“learning
organizations.”*

- We must increase partnerships between K-12 and postsecondary education so the real needs of today's classroom play a greater part in shaping the content of teacher education.
- We must rethink the role and responsibilities of college of education faculty so that they can devote more attention to the practical side of the curriculum.

We must encourage effective alternative certification and teacher preparation strategies, including for-profit and virtual programs.

- We must not bury our heads in the sand and pretend these alternatives will go away. They are growing in influence and promise to reshape the way teachers are prepared.
- We must take advantage of the potential these alternatives offer to increase the efficiency of the teacher preparation process and widen access into the teaching profession.

We must understand that new teachers, like any new professionals, need to be nurtured and guided if they are to be successful.

- We must coach and mentor new teachers intensively.
- We must not give new teachers initial assignments that exceed their abilities and extinguish their enthusiasm for teaching.

We must ensure that ongoing teacher education aims, first and foremost, at enhancing teacher effectiveness and is grounded in accepted principles of effective professional development.

- We must find ways to provide teachers with continuous, real-time feedback on their students' learning so that they can respond promptly to student needs and their own shortcomings.
- Requirements for continuing teacher education should enhance teacher performance, not merely support the accumulation of teacher credentials.

We must restructure schools to become “learning organizations” in which valuable informal opportunities for learning by both teachers and students are promoted and directed at key goals.

- Teachers' classroom isolation must be overcome so teachers can participate with colleagues in frequent exchanges that address specific student and job-related problems.
- The weekly school schedule must be reorganized to allow more opportunity for teachers

to respond to their students' immediate learning needs.

We must evaluate the success of teacher preparation and continuing education strategies on the basis of their impact on student performance.

- We must seek the broader dissemination of those models that prove to be effective.
- We must evaluate the "return on investment" of successful strategies and models so their true cost-effectiveness can be measured.

We must provide incentives and education opportunities for school administrators so the focus of their work becomes the instructional leadership.

- Collectively, principals and their teachers must be held accountable for student learning in their schools.

- Principals and teachers must learn how better to access and manage information about student achievement, and about financial and human resources

Stated simply, we must develop and implement national, state and local education policies that promote proven strategies for the recruitment, preparation, certification and continuing education of highly effective teachers.

These tasks, however, will not be accomplished easily.

FOCUS ON THE WORK AHEAD

Under the leadership of Wyoming Governor Jim Geringer, ECS chairman for 1999-2000, ECS will engage political, education and business leaders, as well as the education community (state agencies, universities, schools of education and state associations), in a thorough review of practices and policy strategies that lead to the vision of a quality teacher in every classroom in the 21st century and to the ultimate goal of increased achievement for all students.

To that end, over the next two years, ECS will do the following:

- Identify the key issues around which public support for teacher quality reform can be marshalled

- Clarify, develop and catalogue new and promising policy options in several areas, including:

- Teacher recruitment and alternative certification
- Teacher preparation
- Ongoing teacher training and education

- Encourage and assist state leaders in their quest to develop effective policy structures around issues related to teacher quality. This work will include:

- Comprehensive teacher quality policy reviews in several pilot states
- In-state workshops that bring together key state policymakers and education leaders to address impor-

tant policy issues related to teacher quality

- Technical assistance to states in support of specific initiatives in the area of teacher quality.



HOW CAN YOU PARTICIPATE?

- Encourage your state leaders to take a thorough look at the state's teacher quality policies
- Take part in the upcoming ECS survey on teacher quality
- Attend and participate in meetings scheduled during the year (see schedule below)
- Attend the 2000 ECS National Forum and Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Sign up your state to host an ECS teacher quality workshop. Workshops will be offered, with the support of the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, beginning in the summer of 2000.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

JULY 1999

Commencement of intensive, three-year ECS project on the recruitment and preparation of high-quality teachers (supported by the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund)

AUGUST 1999

Chairman's meeting on public and policymaker engagement in teacher quality initiatives (supported by the Rockefeller Foundation)

SEPTEMBER 1999

Chairman's meeting in Denver, Colorado, on teacher recruitment and preparation (supported by the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund)

Chairman's meeting on improving teacher education (supported by the MacArthur Foundation)

SEPTEMBER 30, 1999 – OCTOBER 2, 1999

Joint ECS/National Conference of State Legislatures/Consortium on Policy Research in Education/Institute for Educational Leadership conference at Stanford University on the alignment of K-12 and postsecondary policies on teacher education (supported by the U.S. Department of Education)

NOVEMBER 14-16, 1999

ECS Fall Steering Committee Meeting in Williamsburg, Virginia. The Chairman's Initiative Advisory Group will review the summer meetings.

MARCH 2000

ECS Spring Steering Committee Meeting in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The Chairman's Initiative Advisory Group will discuss the pilot state policy reviews and the impending in-state teacher quality workshops.

JULY 9-12, 2000

ECS National Forum and Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota

SUMMER 2000 AND BEYOND

In-state teacher quality policy workshops and intensive technical assistance





RESOURCES

Education Commission of the States — www.ecs.org

DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund Pathways to Teaching Careers Program — www.wallacefunds.org

The Education Trust — www.edtrust.org

National Staff Development Council — www.nsdc.org

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future — www.tc.columbia.edu/~teachcomm

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards — www.nbpts.org

Consortium for Policy Research in Education — www.upenn.edu/gse/cpre

Recruiting New Teachers — www.rnt.org

National Conference of State Legislatures — www.ncsl.org

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education — www.aacte.org

National Alliance of Business — www.nab.com

Thomas B. Fordham Foundation — <http://edexcellence.net>

National Education Association — www.nea.org

American Federation of Teachers — www.aft.org

U.S. Department of Education — www.ed.gov

Impact II — The Teachers Network — www.teachnet.org

Jim Geringer

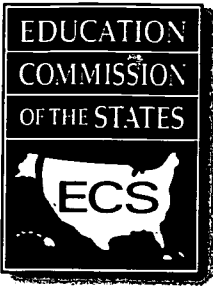
GOVERNOR OF WYOMING
1999-2000 ECS CHAIRMAN

Wyoming Governor Jim Geringer strongly advocates the development and implementation of quality professional development for educators. He also firmly supports the effective use of technology for basic and distance learning. His commitment to education reform has encouraged and supported the development of high standards, performance-based assessment and accountability at the local level.

In his years of service to the State of Wyoming as a legislator and now as governor, Geringer has focused on empowering communities to develop grassroots solutions for the problems that plague everyone, such as education, health care, public safety and quality of life. He advocates economic growth through the Wyoming Business Council and believes economic improvement will be created through a blend of Western frontier ingenuity and futuristic technology.

Geringer is the immediate past chairman of the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission and has served as chairman of the Great Plains Partnership. He serves as the 1999-2000 chairman of the 18-state Western Governors' Association. In addition, he is co-chairman of the National Governors' Association Technology Task Force.

The mission of the Education Commission of the States is to help state leaders identify, develop and implement public policy for education that addresses current and future needs of a learning society.



For more information about
ECS' teacher quality initiative,
please contact:

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Also see:
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